



Tips for Effective Meetings

Meetings, meetings, and more meetings! Here are a few tips to make your next meeting more productive.

1. Have a goal - What do you want to accomplish in your meeting?

Not that you will have the steps to get there, but you should have a vision of where you want to be. A fact we forget...MEETINGS COST MONEY...I was with a group of executives who were called together to make some pretty easy decisions. They were engaged in social conversation and not focusing on the agenda when the CEO walked in and simply stated, "We're spending an awful lot of money in this room, let's get something done!" Next time you're in a meeting, try this exercise: add up all of the dollars you suspect are being spent on wage and salary for the people sitting in the room. You would be amazed at how quickly it adds up. If you are in a meeting that's going nowhere you've got to ask yourself the question, "Is this the most productive use of my time?" and "how much are we costing the company right now?"

2. Elicit participation

If no one is talking in your meeting you can ask simple open-ended questions to elicit dialogue. What do you think about that? What can your team contribute to this project?

3. Look for hidden agendas

As long as there are motives and incentives there will be dissenting opinions. Be careful to consider the motives of the people on your team. Are they working from a "Me" or a "We" point of view? Are people surfacing the pitfalls of the project in order to address them? Every project has critical "go/no go" decision points. Ask the hard questions, "*what can cause this to fail?*", "*what will keep us from our goal?*" A problem defined is often a problem half solved. If you're on the other side of the equation, use appropriate word choices and be tactful.

4. Assign responsibilities and agree on deadlines

Decide who is responsible and accountable for action steps that will carry your ideas forward from the meeting. This usually begins with having an identified outcome or "reason to meet" before you even start the meeting. (See tip one).

5. Reward success

Celebrate the successes of the individuals and the team. For those who aren't achieving their goals have an "offline" conversation that will allow for better, more honest, communication and coaching. In addition, it will help the under-achiever save face, and quite frankly, help you determine if you have the right person for the right job.



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A Leadership Minute from Carter

Carter Campbell

Roi Campbell

6. Have closure at the end of each meeting.

Save the last few minutes of your meeting to recap your accomplishments. Review your progress and be sure that everyone is clear on your next steps and timelines. Every action item should have a champion assigned and proposed deadline

Application:

- Ask, what is your reason for the meeting?
- Consider your destination; what decisions do you want to have by the end of the meeting?
- Have you made assignments with deadlines?